

THE FUTURE

of the

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
26 JAN 1915

University of Texas

It's Duties, Opportunities,
Prospects

A Final Message To the Board of Regents

by

DR. S. E. MEZES,

President, Resigned

Texas UNIVERSITY

AUSTIN

December Sixteen, Nineteen Hundred and Fourteen

All bulletins published by the Organization for the Enlargement by the State of Texas of its Institutions of Higher Education are intended to stimulate critical thought. In order that correct conclusions may be reached the Board of Control would welcome carefully considered communications discussing the problems treated in such publications, or any other questions concerning the State's work of education.

C
T36uEf

Austin, Texas, December 16, 1914.

To the Honorable Members of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas:

Gentlemen: I appreciate very highly the confidence implied in your invitation to prepare a statement embodying my ideas concerning the future of the University of Texas. I am to state what I personally think, and the statement is to be binding on no one and to represent no one but myself. It will have such weight only as my record in Texas will give it, and will have the advantage or disadvantage, as the case may be, of being uninfluenced by either hope of reward or fear of consequences.

I shall tersely and bluntly state my views and, where it seems necessary, the reasons for holding them, without any effort to argue or persuade.

DUTIES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY.

One controlling fact stands out in considering this question: The University of Texas is supported by all the people of Texas; therefore, its opportunity and its duty is to serve all the people in each of the four main ways in which a higher educational institution can serve them.

The first duty of the University is to help its students, in and out of residence, and all other citizens who feel its influence, to perform the duties of citizenship with greater efficiency, broader knowledge, and fuller loyalty.

The second duty of the institution is to train leaders and skilled workers for every occupation carried on in the State whose leaders can be helped by higher education; making a special point of training scientific investigators, teachers for schools and colleges, and prospective public servants.

Its third main duty is to gather a body of trained investigators to study the social, governmental, industrial, and physical problems of the State; to give these investigators the best facilities for carrying on their work; and to publish their results.

The fourth duty and opportunity of the University is to carry to the people useful knowledge concerning the State and its problems in forms usable and easily understood. Knowledge as it exists in the minds of scientific workers, valuable as it is, is generally too technical for popular consumption and understanding. It is necessary to translate this knowledge into the language of the people, simplifying it and adapting it to their practical uses, in order that they may profit by it; and the University should have a body of workers competent to perform this difficult task.

AGENCIES OF SERVICE.

I shall not attempt to enumerate in detail the agencies for service that the University has developed. Your Sixteenth Biennial Report to the Governor and the Legislature, now in the hands of the printer, goes fully into this subject. I hope that every citizen of Texas interested in higher education will read this report thoughtfully. I shall, therefore, merely point out a few of the main facts with which it deals, and later comment on the guiding principles that, in my judgment, should be observed in developing the splendid educational agency possessed by the people of Texas in their State University.

The outstanding fact is that the University of Texas is not one school, but seventeen schools and divisions working together harmoniously for the good of the people. It has a College of Arts, for liberal and cultural training; a Department of Education, to investigate school problems, and to train administrators and teachers for the schools and colleges of the State; departments for research and for the training of leaders in law, engineering, medicine, pharmacy, nursing, science, business and industry, home-making and household management, music, and journalism; a Summer School, chiefly for the benefit of the teachers of the State; a scientific bureau to investigate and give, in popular form, information concerning the mineral resources of the State, including oils and fuels, building material, etc., a scientific bureau dealing, in similar spirit, with municipal problems; a department charged with the sympathetic visitation of, and the giving of friendly aid to, urban and rural schools; and a Department of Extension, through which the teachers and other agencies of the University bring its skilled help to the busy men and women who cannot personally attend the University, by offering college courses through correspondence, and by studying and giving out information concerning schools, agricultural problems—notably the vital and difficult problems of farm marketing, rural credits, and business management—and the problems of the home, especially of the rural home.

These varied agencies are supplying the State with good citizens, trained to be leaders as teachers, lawyers, civil, mechanical and electrical engineers, architects and draftsmen, physicians, pharmacists, nurses, scientific investigators, bankers, merchants, business men, and women competent to manage households and homes.

How can the best service be secured for the State from these many agencies and others not enumerated, and how can their healthful development be best encouraged? In what directions should they develop? I shall discuss these questions under four heads: (1) the staff; (2) developments of service; (3) the plant, and (4) University organization.

THE STAFF.

The first and continuous concern of those who wish the University to become great in power and service should be to get and to keep a strong staff for administration and instruction. Men make a university. It can grow great in humble and cramped quarters; it cannot grow great without strong men.

Difficult as it is to get and to keep strong men and women for the service of the University, it is at least equally difficult to accord them the treatment and to furnish them with the opportunities which, in combination, will cause them to give, in return, the most energetic, most expert, and most loyal service that is in them. A university cannot get the best service from its professors and other officers by regimenting them. It cannot get the best service by treating them as mere employees, subject to orders, without initiative, and without an inspiring and dignified part in the upbuilding of the institution. Men and women who come into university work have gone through a long and expensive apprenticeship. Their hands, brains, and hearts have been trained for a special service. The work expected of them is of a high order and of deep human significance. If treated as mere cogs in a machine; if assigned merely mechanical tasks,—they become dispirited and disheartened; the aspirations with which they entered upon their work are dimmed; and the service they render loses that human quality which gives it its greatest value.

Those who do not know that noble animal, the fine-bred, high-spirited horse, may think that they can get better service by jerking the curb, plying the whip, and jamming the spurs home. Those who understand him know fully that a soothing hand, a firm and gentle word, appropriate food, good stalling, and a light harness that he does not feel, bring far better and higher results. Those foolish enough to hitch him to the plow, run crooked furrows, and lose many races.

A faculty that is nagged, continuously inspected, overburdened with routine, hampered with regulations, denied opportunities for self-expression and for translating its loyalty and interest into acts, is incapable of rendering the high human service for which it enlisted.

The business of the University should be conducted in as business-like a way as possible. Some of it can be managed by specially trained men, but much of it must be managed by members of the faculty. In a university, investigation, teaching, and business of certain kinds are so organically interrelated that the most skillful surgeon could not dissect them apart; or, if he did so, by some impossible skill, the severed tissues would either and die. A number of members of the present faculty are good business men, and no doubt the faculty will always have

some men of this type. But the men who come into a faculty are not primarily trained for business efficiency. Their chief training is for scholarship and teaching. It would be as reasonable to expect them to conduct a business up to the last notch of efficiency as it would be to expect the traveling salesman of a hardware concern to write like Shakespeare, speak like Demosthenes, or sing like Melba. Should such excellence of performance be required of the latter, the sales of the company would fall off, and its literary output, oratory, and songs would be none the better.

Faculty men and women are reasonable. They know that organization is necessary; they know that leadership is indispensable; they know that loyal and proper subordination is required for the success of the cause. They respond generously to generous treatment; they repay trust with devotion; they welcome opportunities to help in a cause of significance. They ask only to be treated fairly, like human beings engaged in a great work to which their lives are devoted.

Bricks are not made without straw. Men cannot work without tools. Laboratories and libraries, together with money enough, and other important aids, such as clerks, stenographers, and assistants, to carry the deadening routine, are the tools of university men. Many a good man will come to the University, even at a sacrifice of salary, if he is given these tools. Many a one will stay if he has these tools. A denial of them has caused many to leave, and will cause more to leave in the future.

Like their fellows, most university men have families. It is their duty and privilege to care for these families and to look forward to the future of their children. They cannot pay their bills with high ideals, or educate their children on the scholarly output of studies and laboratories. They care less than most men for money, but they need it for their necessities and for the legitimate requirements of their families. They cannot disregard salary.

The salary scale of the University of Texas is far too low. The State Universities at all comparable with this institution pay at least one and a half times as much as we pay here. The scale that obtains in the stronger endowed universities of the country is even double our present scale. For years, it has been useless for the University of Texas even to attempt the recruiting of its faculty from among the acknowledged leaders in the various subjects. It has had to be contented with seeking the services of young men of good training, ability, and promise, with futures undetermined and possibly disappointing. It has been fortunate in its choices, and has a strong faculty. But it cannot make fortunate guesses always. It should be able to fill at least its most important vacancies with men whose reputation and capacity have been fully proven.

Moreover, the University has suffered greatly in the past, and will continue to suffer, from the loss of some of its strongest men, attracted elsewhere each year by greater opportunities and higher salaries. It should not be in so large a measure a training camp of passage for bright, capable men, who are drawn from it into permanently attractive service elsewhere.

Until the present scale is raised by a half, and eventually doubled, Texas cannot have a really great University.

DEVELOPMENTS OF SERVICE.

The University is undermanned. It has too few teachers for its students. It has 5.7 teachers per hundred students in the regular session; whereas the average per hundred in state universities comparable with Texas is 9.5. As a result, many classes are too large; students do not receive the individual attention they need; and instruction tends to become mechanical. Boys and girls who, with a little more attention, would become good students, fail, get discouraged, leave, and lose the only opportunity that will come to them for a higher education. Others who do not leave, receive an inferior training. The University needs more teachers.

All, or nearly all, of the departments of teaching, investigation, and general service that it will need are present, at least in germ, in the University now. But one or two should be added, and several should be further developed in the near future.

A school of art should be established. For lack of it, much talent is going to waste, and life in Texas is grayer, less pleasant, and less inspired than it should be. If the State had more art, its citizens would wander less, and fewer of the best type would leave.

Work in agriculture should be established at the earliest possible moment. Texas is overwhelmingly rural; agriculture is its chief occupation. Every boy and girl of college age should be able, whatever the college attended, to learn as much about agriculture as he or she can be induced to absorb. No institution has a right of monopoly on this subject. The young people of Texas cannot know too much about it.

Our Department of Extension is serving the people well. It should be fostered and expanded with thoughtful judgment. It is the chief agency for diffusing, throughout the State, useful knowledge that the people can digest and apply, and should be fashioned into a highly efficient instrument for the accomplishment of this most difficult undertaking. Former President Houston, now National Secretary of Agriculture, says that the people can use only such scientific knowledge as has been weaned. I know of no more telling word to characterize the chief duty of the department. Scientific knowledge is born of its

father, the investigator, and its mother, the library-laboratory. As it first appears, it cannot stand alone and make its way among men for their use and service. In order that it may make its way, it must be adapted and fashioned into forms qualifying it for independent usefulness. It must be so trained and remade as to be able, without aid of scientist, library, or laboratory, to make a place for itself in the minds of busy men and women, unaccustomed to and unskilled in dealing with abstract truths. Pure science must become applied science, and applied science must be made over into popular knowledge.

It is supremely difficult to accomplish this. But it can be done, and has been and is being done, notably in Denmark, Holland and Germany, the most efficient and thrifty of peoples. If Texas is wise enough to support generously the Department of Extension of the University and to develop it to its full power, it, with the aid of other agencies, can help the people to use the rich and varied resources of the State, in men and materials, and to transform this great commonwealth into one of the most prosperous, efficient, and happy areas in either hemisphere.

But, in order that knowledge should be diffused, it must first be born. And knowledge of the physical, industrial, and social resources of Texas is scant indeed. Compared with what we could know, at present we know nothing. This means that the University must hum with investigation, as a hive hums with bees. It means, further, that the chief stress of effort should be laid on Texas problems. But it is equally important that this should not be done in too narrow and materialistic a spirit. Investigators can, to an extent, choose their own problems, and should be encouraged to choose those that are vital. But it is sheer folly to attempt to choose their problems for them. A man skilled in the search for new truth must prosecute his search as his talent directs. He can be encouraged to seek it in practical directions rather than in others. But, if force is applied, the hen that lays these golden eggs will become sterile. Nor is it possible to know beforehand which products of the library and laboratory will be serviceable and which will not. Once more, new-born truth is like a new-born child. Its possibilities are so many, so varied, and so rich that none can foretell its future. Any child born today may, for all we know, become a Shakespeare, a Goethe, a Luther, a Washington, or a Lincoln. It is for this reason that childhood is sacred. And the same is true of new-born truths. Any one of them may aid and make possible practical advances like those ushered into the world by the invention of the steam engine, the electric light, the trolley car and the new methods in agriculture, in the chemical arts, or in the affairs of government and social service.

Germany, more than any other nation, has had the insight to

value investigation and the skill to apply its results to practical uses. As a consequence, in a brief half century, it rose from the position of a second-rate industrial power, or even lower, to a chief place among the nations in industry, commerce, manufacture, social organization, and the general diffusion of order and well-being. If the public men of Texas have the vision and will support and develop their University into first-class efficiency for the discovery and diffusion of knowledge, there is no reason why the progress here should be less rapid—it may even be more rapid—than the progress of the last few decades in Germany.

THE PLANT.

In a few subjects and directions, the equipment of the University, in library and laboratories, is respectable. In most directions, it is quite insufficient. In none is it adequate.

The insufficiency of the buildings of the University, in room, in kind, and in their suitability for its needs and purposes, is too well known to require more than mention. In your Sixteenth Biennial Report, you point out that at the present time there is urgent need of additional buildings whose estimated cost would be \$1,700,000. It is safe to say that, if the University is to render the services the people need, there should be invested in its buildings, within the next ten years, at least five or six million dollars. Later on, I will say something of the methods of raising this large sum.

In this statement, a few words may be written concerning the character and grouping of the buildings that the University needs, and will ultimately have. This discussion conveniently falls under three heads: (1) instruction buildings; (2) dormitories for men; and (3) dormitories for women.

Among the University's buildings for administration and instruction, a few, probably not more than three, should be, if possible, the most beautiful and substantial in the world, not sumptuous or fussily ornate, but solidly beautiful. These might well be the successor of the present Main Building and two others flanking it on either side, a library, and possibly a museum to house examples of Texas materials, products, and processes, with sufficient articles of historical significance to form an instructive background.

The remaining buildings for administration and instruction should, in my judgment, be workshops. The lines should be good, architecturally unexceptionable, and the material should be fireproof. The buildings, however, should be severely plain structures that invite to work, but flexible and easily changeable, so that, without undue expense, walls, whether outer or inner, may be torn down, additions built, and partitions shifted. Uni-

versities and colleges the country over are straight-jacketed by their buildings. Laboratories constructed as short a time ago as ten years obstruct rather than facilitate the work of the scientists and the students occupying them. Science is advancing so rapidly that no one can look many years into the future in determining the facilities that will best aid its work. And science is a very personal matter. The laboratory of a scientist should fit him as any skilled worker's tool fits his hand. With a rapidly changing personnel on all faculties, especially on ours, this renders imperative a highly flexible style of construction for the working buildings of the University. Ambitious citizens unacquainted with these facts will no doubt urge you to construct every building out of imperishable granite, so it may last forever. I am sure it would be wiser to construct most university buildings out of I-beams with hollow tile, waterproof cement on metal lathing, or some other material equally inexpensive and flexible, using this construction both for outer and inner walls.

Dormitories for men students should, I think, be scattered; for women students, gathered into one group, according to the customary plan. With the latter suggestion, no doubt all will agree, for obvious reasons. The suggestion for men has not been deliberately adopted by any university, so far as I am informed. But, after much thought, I have become convinced that it is wise. There is nothing so wholesome for young men attending college as to live in houses surrounded by the dwellings of average men, women and children. In earlier days, when colleges educated young men exclusively for the learned professions, in following which they would, in the main, be brought into contact with only the more prosperous classes, little was lost and something gained by segregating them, away from ordinary men, during their college years. But today our universities, especially our State universities, are training young men for higher efficiency in the ordinary rough and tumble of life. A large part of their efficiency consists in a superior aptitude in dealing and in getting on with all sorts and conditions of men. With this end in view, I think it is obviously advantageous for young men, during their four formative years in college, to continue in the closest contact possible with the average of their fellow-citizens. It is also of the highest advantage to them to remain under the refining and safeguarding influence of good women and young children. All these things can, I think, be best accomplished by scattering the dwelling places of men students about the residential district of a city like Austin.

UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATION.

The University has two governing boards, a faculty, a student body, some twenty thousand graduates and other former students, and an interested constituency consisting of the entire pop-

ulation of the State. These various component parts of the University are organized reasonably well, but not so well that improvements are impossible.

Of the part played by students, it is not necessary to say more than a word here; for the reason that they do their part quite as efficiently as can be at all reasonably expected—more efficiently, I am persuaded, than practically any other student body in the country. Their place in the life of the University will no doubt be improved in the future, but the improvement is likely to be in detail rather than in general plan.

The alumni are giving help to the institution that is increasing rapidly in amount, in intelligence, and in efficacy. They can do much more than they have done, and will, beyond question, avail themselves of their opportunity in the future. I do not believe that they will make the fatal mistake that some alumni bodies have made—the mistake of attempting to control the University. Some institutions, in and out of Texas, have been greatly damaged by the indiscreet, excessive, and ill-informed interference of alumni. One or two institutions outside the State narrowly escaped serious calamity, because of their alumni's ill-judged efforts to aid. But our alumni, I am glad to say, are of a different temper.

It has been the custom here, as at all other well-organized universities, to leave educational questions to the initiative of the faculty, who are the institution's experts in matters educational. This is a wise custom, from which I hope there will be no departure. The faculty should determine the subjects and methods of investigation, the arrangement of courses, their content, the methods of teaching, the requirements for degrees, and the regulations (so far as regulations are needed) binding upon students and fixing their status in the life of the University. The president should act as the leader of the faculty. But his proper function is to take counsel and to make suggestions. It is not to issue orders, or to drive his own ideas rough-shod over unwilling and unconvinced professors. Being charged with the duty of supervising all the activities of the University, as distinguished from the more restricted emphasis of interest and duty that naturally fall to individual professors, he should be able more easily to bring into educational discussions the wider points of view of the general interest and of the public good; while they, in turn, are more competent to see to it that the specialized opportunities for service of the particular departments are not lost sight of in exaggerated zeal for immediate results, on the one hand, or for the attainment of distant aims, on the other.

A faculty is open to three chief dangers: (1) the tendency to encourage too much inbreeding through the selection, as assistants, of favorite and unduly subordinate students of mediocre ability; (2) the disposition to undervalue new subjects of in-

struction and new university activities with which their own training has not made them familiar, and with which their natural and wholesome conservatism prevents them from sympathizing; and (3) the tendency to indulge an amiable and easy senatorial courtesy, with an over-tenderness for the mere foibles and personal preferences of their colleagues. Because of these inherent qualities of a faculty, which are a part of its strength when not exaggerated, it is best that appointments and promotions, the administrative organization of the University, the decision as to the launching of new projects of activity, and the administrative detail of the University in its inner workings, should continue in the control of the Board of Regents, the President, and the Deans, as the necessity in each case may require.

The government of the University is vested, aside from constitutional provisions adopted by the people as a whole, in its two boards; the Legislature, including the Governor, and the Regents. Of the part played by the Legislature, I shall speak under a later head.

The Board of Regents is, ordinarily, the supreme authority; and it is proper that it should fully reserve to itself the right to correct any important evil that may arise, and to launch any important new departure that could not otherwise come into being. It cannot, however, conduct the affairs of the University in detail, except some business matters, chiefly external. This detailed management it must delegate to administrative officers, investigators and teachers. Its chief functions are two in number: (1) to determine the policies of the University; and (2) to judge whether its agents are carrying out these policies loyally and with full effectiveness. These duties call for broad and farsighted wisdom, a keen aptitude for getting cogent information, great sagacity in judging men and their competence for the tasks assigned them, and a wise and self-denying prudence in deciding on the things that a governing board can do and the things that a governing board cannot do in the interest of the University.

There is one type of governing board that attempts to conduct the business of a university in detail. Wherever found, this type of board has proved itself an inefficient instrument. I refer to a paid board, which I hope will never exist in control of any educational institution in Texas. A board that is paid must devote its entire time to its official business; and this, together with the kind of men who inevitably constitute such a board, their number, and the obligations under which they rest, fatally prevents it from performing the highest duties of a governing board, and fatally compels it to perform duties for which it is not fitted. No large enterprise can be successfully administered by a committee or commission; the chief executive must, for efficiency, be an individual, with a staff of expert aids. And yet the members of

a paid board, of necessity, administer the institution in order to earn their salaries, as their entire time cannot be filled in defining policies and in performing other proper functions. A paid board gives over the administration of an institution to political control, as its members are, of necessity, political appointees, and withdraws administrative direction from a non-political and independent chief executive, appointed indefinitely during good behavior and satisfactory service. The members of a paid board cannot, as statutes are drawn, and must be drawn, receive sufficiently high pay to attract men of first-class ability, and their tenure has to be so short and so uncertain that the most desirable men will not serve. Men of large and successful business and professional experience will serve on unpaid boards, whose members devote only a fractional part of their time to their official duties. Men of this desirable type will not serve on a paid board.

Probably the greatest danger to which the Regents are exposed arises from the many temptations persistently thrust upon them to consider the personal and political obligations under which they lie in the management of the affairs of the University, especially in appointments. If a board succumbs to this peril, it injures the University entrusted to its management grievously, and it may be irreparably. The ideal regent is an active business or professional man who mixes with his fellows in the conduct of large affairs and enjoys the interest and participation in public activities properly expected of good citizens. These very qualifications bind such men in strong ties of personal, professional and political friendship to other strong men, and give these others the right to call upon them for favors in return for favors done. The Board of Regents of the University of Texas, with remarkably few exceptions, has withstood these temptations. As compared with many another institution, the University can be said to have been clean in this respect. Of this record, the people have a right to be proud.

But there are constant dangers that the record will be marred, and that ominous departures from wholesome practice will take place. If even a few members of the governing board become actively desirous of listening to personal and political suggestions at the expense of the higher interests of the University, it is always possible that the senatorial courtesy that renders the business of the Regents so pleasant to conduct and so smooth of operation will come into play, and prevent other regents from standing out against baneful suggestions.

The situation here is identical, in its general features, with the situation in which every other state university finds itself. One device has been found effective by all the strong universities in averting this great danger. That device has been recently

adopted here, and it is to be hoped that it will continue to have a place among the standing regulations of the Regents of the University. I refer to the self-denying ordinance by which the Regents agree that they will make no appointments, promotions, demotions, or dismissals that are not recommended by the President of the University. He has no right to engage in private business, and should be dismissed summarily if he takes part in politics of any kind. He therefore has no personal obligations and no political obligations; he is under no temptation to recommend appointments or other changes in the personnel of the University because of such solicitations; and, knowing that the presence in the University of strong men fairly dealt with is the indispensable basis for its prosperity and for the success of his administration, he is under the most persuasive inducement to govern himself accordingly.

THE LEGISLATURE AND LEGISLATION.

I have spoken of the Legislature as one of the governing boards of the University, and so it is. It governs the University by determining biennially what funds shall be available for the carrying on of its activities; and, in performing this function, it from time to time at least prevents things from being done which its colleagues, the Regents, believe to be desirable, or even all but necessary. Moreover, in measures besides the money bills, the Legislature exercises control over the University. If this function is exercised in a responsible spirit, the Legislature can greatly help the institution both negatively and positively.

The corollary is that the Legislature can greatly injure and hamper the University. It seems plain that a body of men, many of whom are serving their first term, and none of whom have any continuous or intimate knowledge of the workings of the institution, cannot, with profit to the State, attempt to direct its affairs in any detail.

At the same time, the Legislature can not escape the duty of giving some directions to the University; and it is to be hoped that it will, in time, devise some method of performing this duty that will enable it to deal with so important a matter in a manner less casual than it has heretofore adopted. I believe it would be a good plan for the Legislature to employ, every few years, a small expert commission, made up of two leading educators, from without the State, of National prominence and competence, and of one first-class business expert, this commission being charged with a thorough detailed study of the institution and the formulation of a report, with criticisms and constructive suggestions.

If the University is to serve Texas as it should, its income must be greatly increased—in fact, more than doubled. A mod-

ern State university cannot operate efficiently on less than two millions a year; and, in a huge State like Texas, it should, in the near future, be provided with three millions annually. Three universities in States much smaller are expending nearly the latter sum today, to the great benefit of their constituencies.

In addition, the following measures of legislation would, I believe, be very helpful to the University in the performance of its duties of service, and correspondingly helpful to the State as a whole: (1) a statutory measure levying a special tax for the support of the institution; (2) an amendment repealing the portion of Section 14 of Article VII. of the Constitution prohibiting appropriations of tax levies for the erection of University buildings; and (3) a statutory measure, if the Constitution permits that method, authorizing the issuance of bonds, with interest and sinking fund payable out of the available University fund, for the construction of buildings and the purchase of additional grounds to enlarge the campus.

The special tax has been so often and fully discussed that little need be said here. It costs no more to support the University out of the proceeds of a special tax than out of biennial appropriations. The chief advantages of the tax are two: (1) the Regents will know what they can depend upon in the matter of support, and can lay their plans accordingly in a far-sighted and business-like way; (2) the University will be withdrawn further from the disturbing and perilous contact with politics into which the method of biennial appropriations unavoidably draws it.

The University is the only institution in Texas and the only university in existence which is prevented by State Constitution from constructing buildings out of moneys appropriated from the general revenue or proceedings from tax levies. The prohibition was the chance enactment of a busy convention; has not the shadow of reason for its existence; does no particle of good; and should unquestionably be repealed at the earliest moment possible.

The briefest study of the question makes it plain that those who object to authorizing the issuance of bonds under reasonable restrictions for the construction of buildings do so because they have given the question no study. The advantages of the plan are palpable, and there are no serious objections to it if the measure is properly drawn. It is a plan that has been adopted by every large private enterprise that is intelligently managed; the plan that has been adopted in constructing practically all the existing school buildings in Texas and in other States, as well as by most counties and cities here and elsewhere. Its convenience arises from the fact that buildings are costly, and that it has been at no time possible in Texas to provide large enough buildings, good enough buildings and a sufficient number of buildings

to meet the needs, if their total cost is to be borne by the tax-payers of a single year. Its equity arises from the fundamental maximum of taxation, that those who enjoy the benefits derived from the proceeds of tax levies should pay the taxes, and that it is unfair for only a portion of those enjoying such benefits to meet the entire tax. Properly constructed buildings should last from thirty to a hundred years; their cost should be borne by the people enjoying and receiving the benefit from them at least during the thirty-year period.

I am disposed to recommend a fourth legislative measure, if the Constitution permits, framed to disfranchise all teachers and other officers of the University, and possibly of the other State educational institutions, not in matters municipal or national, but in elections dealing with State officers and State issues. University professors are officers of the State's intellectual forces. Like officers of the National army and navy, who are disfranchised, to their benefit and the benefit of the Nation, it is their duty to co-operate with the political officials of the State; and any obstacle to sympathetic and harmonious co-operation should, I think, be removed. Men who attain to high political posts in this and in other States are compelled, under our system, to battle vigorously for their victory. In doing so, they make strong friends and strong enemies. Moreover, the type of man who is likely to succeed has almost inevitably the qualities of a good friend and a vigorous enemy—a red-blooded man, and therefore often ruthless. It is inevitable that the thinking men who compose a university faculty should hold opinions of their own, and that some of them, from time to time a majority of them, should have voted against the Governor and other successful officers of the State. It is inevitable that these officials should cherish some resentment and that co-operation between them and men of the University, that would be very helpful and serviceable to the people, becomes difficult, or even impossible. The disfranchisement, to the extent suggested, of University men would free them for such services, and do no substantial harm.

ORGANIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

In attempting to improve organization, the temptation is strong to overorganize. It is as important and as difficult to avoid overorganization as it is to escape from underorganization.

There are those who have suggested that all State institutions, educational, penal, and eleemosynary, should be controlled by a single board; and, in fact, a few States have gone to this absurd extreme. I know of no serious proposal to repeat that error here. The problems of the three types of institutions are so different that a board of Solons, Washingtons, and Bismarcks could not successfully administer them all together. It is not even clear that it would be well for Texas to place all its educa-

tional institutions under the management of a single board. Indeed, I am personally convinced that it would be a great blunder to do so.

The Normal schools are a distinct type, and should follow a definite plan of development, unhampered by the different types of service expected of other institutions. It is fortunate that they now have a governing board of their own. They have grown marvelously since it took charge, and are getting sounder, more efficient, and more helpful each year. It is to be hoped that no change will be made which will slow down or harmfully divert their progress.

Much the same is true of the College of Industrial Arts. It is, in many ways, a unique institution—so unique that it can well be called an experiment, and, one must add, a successful experiment. I am convinced that it is for the best interest of the State and of the young women who attend the College that it should be free to develop independently, and to work out a scheme of education peculiarly fitted to the needs of the young women in whose interest it was established and for the needs of the State, which these young women, as trained at the College, are peculiarly fitted to serve.

On the other hand, abundant experience compels the conclusion that it would be greatly to the interest of the State and the institutions concerned to place the University and the Agricultural and Mechanical College under a single governing board. A few bald facts, known as facts to every citizen of Texas interested in higher education, enforces this conclusion. Under the Constitution, the University of Texas has two branches: the Medical Department, at Galveston; and the Agricultural and Mechanical College, near Bryan. The University and the Medical Department have co-operated throughout their existence. Each has helped the other. There has been no friction, no misunderstanding, no hampering of one by the other. Each has developed healthfully. The University is a strong institution. The Medical Department is stated by the highest authorities on medical education in the country to be one of the very strongest that they know; and they have inspected each and every one with expertness and thoroughness. These two parts of the University have been governed by the same board.

Despite the provision of the Constitution, the University and the Agricultural and Mechanical College are, and always have been, separate and autonomous institutions. So little have they co-operated that it could be said, with substantial truth, that they have not co-operated at all. The rivalry between them has been keen, persistent, and mutually hurtful. Men of good sense belonging to each of the two institutions sincerely believe outrageous things about equally sensible and sane men belonging to the

other institution. The rivalry has gone that far. Much of the time of the authorities of each institution has been, of necessity, given to ascertaining and guarding against the rival endeavors of the other, and has thus been withdrawn, by just so much, from helpful service to the common cause. Even more time on either part has been devoted to doing things in the hard way, that could have been done easily had there been co-operation. Each institution is comparatively warped and lopsided because of the restrictions on its development rendered inevitable by disunion. The spectacle of concord and co-operative service, on the one hand, and of discord and mutual thwarting, on the other, with the waste that they imply, is illuminating.

Moreover, the situation in Texas is a monotonous repetition of the situation in forty-four other States. In twenty-three States, the several universities and agricultural and mechanical colleges together form single institutions. The growth of these institutions in power and service is the educational wonder of America. In addition to other splendid services, the aid they have given the agricultural interests of their States is very great, and has inspired the visits and awakened the admiration of experts in agricultural education the world over.

In twenty-one States, the several universities and agricultural and mechanical colleges are under separate managements. In them, the universities are comparatively weak; and, with one or two exceptions, the agricultural and mechanical colleges are deplorably low-classed institutions. Indeed, of the two, the latter suffer more; largely for the reason that they have been forced, by the logic of the situation, to attempt to develop practically all university branches in addition to their work in agriculture; and, as a consequence, agriculture has greatly suffered and been inexcusably inefficient. Furthermore, petty rivalries, unworthy personal misunderstandings, thwarted efforts, undignified surmisings, and well-founded and ill-founded mutual criminations and recriminations squirm and wriggle over and through the higher education of twenty-one States.

A new Federal statute, the Smith-Lever bill, so strongly reinforces the reasons for union under one board as to render them irresistible. Under this act, if the State co-operates, \$70,000 will be expended next year in extension work in agriculture and home economics for the benefit of rural Texas; and, seven years from now, \$500,000 will be expended for these purposes. Under the provisions of the act and of Texas statutes, this money must be expended under the direction of an officer elected by the governing board of the Agricultural and Mechanical College. So far as extension service in some obvious directions is concerned, the College is, beyond question, the State's best agency. But it is a plain fact that the College is not, and cannot become, the best

agency for apportioning their share of these vast sums to the interest of the rural women and the rural homes of Texas, or for expending their portion; and any encouragement and aid, acceptable to them, that can be brought to the rural women and the rural homes of Texas, will do an amount of good that is literally incalculable. It would be nothing short of a crime to render inferior service in a direction where the highest service is called for. That this higher service can be rendered by the University, with its vigorous work in home economics and its eight hundred young women in attendance, and by the College of Industrial Arts, with its well-organized teaching and eager feminine student body, is too obvious for insistence. And yet, under present conditions, with two boards, co-operation between the officers of the Agricultural and Mechanical College, well intentioned though they be, and the officers of the other two institutions, is so hampered and so difficult that little can be expected of it.

And what is true of home economics under the Smith-Lever bill is equally true of rural education (it is well to remember that rural education is the weakest link in the State's educational chain), and almost equally true of rural economics, rural social betterment, rural sanitation, and rural business. It can be said, without any danger of competent contradiction, that no expert in any one of these subjects would hesitate, after inquiry, to state that the University, with its strong departments in each of these directions, can render greater service than can possibly be rendered by the Agricultural and Mechanical College, in which work of this character does not exist, or exists only in feeble germs. This is no criticism on the College, for work of these types does not belong there.

Were the governing board of the College also the governing board of the University, all of these difficulties, or nearly all of them, would disappear. And, when it is remembered that Texas is at least three-fourths rural, the advantage to the State of the utmost efficiency of service in aid of rural conditions is abundantly plain; and hardly any sacrifice of sentiment and reversal of tradition, especially of ill-working tradition, would be too high a price to pay for so immense an improvement.

Should the single-board plan be adopted, it would be eminently wise, in the act creating the board, to authorize it to establish and conduct at least four schools, laying emphasis on extremely practical agricultural training, one in each of the sections of the State characterized by distinctive soil and climatic conditions. The main purpose of these schools should be to train skilled farmers and farmers' wives rather than to impart any large amount of scientific knowledge touching agriculture. These schools should help to hold a majority of rural-bred young people on the farms, and should never develop into institutions of the



3 0112 106085514

highest learning. They should train for farming as a trade rather than as a profession. In order to co-ordinate their work with that of the University and the Agricultural and Mechanical College, and more especially in order to prevent them, under pressure of local ambition, from being developed into large and costly institutions, these schools should be governed by the board mentioned above. Excellent schools of this type have been in successful operation for years in Denmark. In this country, the best examples are found in Minnesota.

Like every other college, the Agricultural and Mechanical College will draw most of its students from nearby counties. The boys and girls needing agricultural training in other sections of the State have a right to be given such training. Texas needs more rather than less of it, and more institutions rather than fewer to give it. If the schools suggested are established and all the present State institutions meet adequately the need of their students for agricultural education, rural schools will grow up more rapidly, and enlightened, skillful, and therefore contented, farmers will multiply. Centers of distribution for agricultural information will be nearer to all, and an intelligent appreciation of the possibilities and value of the fundamental calling of the people of Texas will become widespread over the State.

In this connection, mention should be made of the belief of many good lawyers that the Board of Regents of the University, under the Constitution, has been, since its creation, and now is, the governing board of the Agricultural and Mechanical College. The constitutional provision in point (Section 13, Article VII.) does not give directions to the Legislature, as do many others. It is self-enacting, and reads as follows: "**The Agricultural and Mechanical College is hereby made and constituted a branch of the University of Texas.**" How the College can be an independent and autonomous institution, under a separate board, and at the same time be a **branch**, in any conceivable meaning of the word, is difficult—indeed, all but impossible—to understand.

CONCLUSION.

My purpose was to discuss only the most important questions. I have been compelled to omit some of these. But, incomplete as the statement is, in some respects, and too long, I submit it for your consideration, in the earnest hope that it may be of some small service, and may, most inadequately and in part, pay the heavy debt I owe—and cannot hope to meet—to you, the University, and the State.

S. E. MEZES.